DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 021 488 FL 000 590

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INTENSIVE LANGUAGE TRAINING. OCCASIONAL PAPERS IN LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS, SERIES A, NUMBER 4.

Ohio Univ., Athens.
Report No- OUPC-SER-A-NO-4
Pub Date 15 Feb 67
Note- 7p.
EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.36
Descriptors- *COLLEGE LANGUAGE PROGRAMS, CONVENTIONAL INSTRUCTION, *INTENSIVE LANGUAGE COURSES, *LANGUAGE FLUENCY, *LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION, LITERATURE REVIEWS, *PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING, SKILL DEVELOPMENT
Identifiers- Army Specialized Training Program, Civilian Affairs Training School, *Defense Language Institute

A history of intensive language training in the United States is given in this paper, and some key literature in the field is briefly reviewed. The article distinguishes two types of intensive language training--(1) the "semi-intensive" civilian university courses deriving from the Army Specialized Training Program and the Civilian Affairs Training School and (2) the "truly intensive" program of the Defense Language Iinstitute and its civilian adjuncts. The characteristics of both types of programs are described, and the article recommends that civilian colleges and universities draw on both methods to produce more intensive language programs and to upgrade their regular language orograms. (AR)

FL 000 390

ED021488

OCCASIONAL PAPERS

in Language, Literature and Linguistics

Publications Committee
Ohio University
Athens, Ohio

Series A, Number 4.
February 15, 1967.

"Intensive Language Training".
Orrin Frink

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Intensive Language Training

Orrin Frink

The concept of intensive language training arose and flourished in two traditions, both traditions born of military expediency. One tradition grew under the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) and the Army's Civilian Affairs Training School (CATS) founded in 1943, descendents of which lingered on in one form or another at a number of civilian universities during the first post-Second World War decade. It is this tradition that produced so much controversy in our professional journals over the last twenty years. Attempts to apply the principles developed under the ASTP and CATS programs to semi-intensive civilian language courses meeting 8-12 hours per week gave rise to many misunderstandings concerning the nature of intensive language training.

In the other tradition, intensive language courses meeting 30-40 hours per week have been offered by the Army Language School and the Navy Language School for more than three decades. Although these programs received little attention in the professional journals, a great deal of our modern foreign language training methodology had its origin in these schools and their civilian adjuncts, where the earlier traditions of intensive language training are still carried on.

The historical background is nowhere clearly spelled out for intensive language training, and although none of them distinguish sufficiently clearly between the two traditions, the following five sources present a fairly good impression of the general trends in intensive language training.

William G. Moulton's splendid article "Linguistics and Language Teaching in the United States 1940-1960," which appeared in the inaugural issue of the International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching presents a general outline of the development of the intensive idea.[1] Moulton interprets and presents the development and growth of the new language methodology from the point of view of a linguist who was intimately involved with the application of the most modern theories of linguistics to the problem of fast, effective mass training in foreign languages for the military during the Second World War and in the post-war years. His chronicle draws on well over a hundred sources, following the new methodology from its inception under the guidance of the American Council of Learned Societies in 1941 through its extension under the ASTP and CATS programs in 1943, the expansion of the Army and Navy Language Schools, and other post-war civilian university language programs.

A second account appears in the form of an article, "The Application of Linguistics to Language Teaching," by Mary R. Haas in the anthology Anthropology Today edited by A.L. Kroeber.[2] The author writes from the view point of a linguist and traces the appearance and adoption of modern linguistic techniques by the ASTP and subsequent post-war semi-intensive programs initiated at a number of universities.

A third account tracing the development of the intensive idea is found in Jacob Ornstein's article "Structurally Oriented Texts and Teaching Methods Since World War II: A Survey and Appraisal."[3] Here we find structural linguistics again flourishing under the ASTP and subsequent civilian programs, and practically no mention of the Army and Navy Language Schools.

The two most detailed texts on the wartime language teaching methodology are Armed Forces Foreign Language Teaching, 1947 by Angiolillo, and Area Studies in the Armed Services, 1947 by Matthew.[4,5] Both accounts stress the ASTP and CATS aspect of the programs, while the latter contains an excellent annotated bibliography with over two hundred source articles, books and documents prior to 1948 which are pertinent to intensive language training.

ASTP, CATS and Semi-Intensive

As stated in the Army directives issued June 23, 1943, the specific objectives were quite general. We find that any methodology which would achieve the objectives outlined was acceptable to the military, and that according to the directive, provision for seventeen contact hours of language study per week was to be made in the curriculum for the ASTP.[6] Professional criticism of the ASTP was quickly felt and quickly answered by Cowan and Graves. Their answer appeared in the February 1944 issue of Hispania and suggested that the "dribble method" of learning languages (three hours a week for years) was insufficient, that better results are obtained by more concentrated use of the students' time (a minimum of ten hours per week), that major emphasis at first should be placed upon the acquisition of spoken language, and that language instruction should be controlled by a trained technical linguist.[7]

Perhaps the clearest explanation of method was the one adopted by the Commission on Trends in Education of the Modern Language Association of America on May 27, 1944:

> "Many persons have been led to believe that these striking results were attained through the discovery of a magical new method. This is by no means true. On the contrary, they were the fruits of the application of well-tried practices. Nor were the results achieved under the direction of linguistic magicians. The entire language program was designed by teachers of foreign languages in consultation with the War Department, and in the fifty-five colleges and universities to which the trainees were assigned the program was entrusted to the foreign language departments, which organized the work, gave instruction to the student-soldiers, and engaged and supervised special assistants required for any emergency..."[8]

Springer notes that in accordance with the war-time directives, intensive language study under the ASTP was to have the following specific features: a large number of instructional hours (contact hours) in a relatively short period of time, small numbers of students per class, a combination of presentation of language structure and conversational practice, emphasis on drill and the formation of linguistic habits, phonemic analysis and transcription, employment of native informants, and a specific objective of command of the colloquial spoken form of the language.[9] It is not surprising then, to find Haas noting in 1953 that some language teachers were delighted with the results achieved by the new methods, while others (particularly those who had little firsthand contact with them) hated the very thought of the innovations.[10] This feeling of hatred and suspicion persists twenty years later, and the reason is not difficult to understand. Few of the shorter,

hence more popular, articles published during the twenty year post-war period agree on the essential nature of intensive language training, and most of these attribute the innovations exclusively to the model of the ASTP.

The so-called "intensive language" courses developed by a score of American universities in the late 1940's and 1950's were patterned on the experiences of the ASTP program and finally resulted in standard "Intensive" courses such as the Intensive Russian 101-102 now offered by the Slavic Department of Indiana University. Such a course meets eight hours a week meeting one hour a day, five days a week with a native Russian drill instructor, with an additional three one-hour sessions under the guidance of a trained linguist or Russian specialist. Although eight hours per week is more than half of a student's normal fifteen hour class load, this accounts for only a very small portion of the hundred sixty-eight hours per week that are available. Such a course could be called "intensive" only after the model of the ASTP and CATS programs of the second World War.

DLI and Intensive.

By an act of Congress in February 1962, the Army Language School in California, and the Navy Language School in Washington, D.C. were combined under the jurisdiction of the newly created Defense Language Institute (DLI), the two language schools becoming respectively DLI-West Coast and DLI-East Coast. At this merger, DLI also assumed the responsability of negotiating contracts with civilian universities to provide intensive language training for the Air Force. For the last several years, truly intensive language training based on maximum utilization of the available time has been carried on chiefly by DLI-West Coast, DLI-East Coast, by Yale, Syracuse and Indiana University for the Air Force, and by the Foreign Service Institute of the Department of State, Georgetown University and the National Security Agency. The July 16, 1965 issue of TIME magazine devoted two columns to the Army Language School DLI-West Coast in an article which briefly describes the installation's business of training 2,500 military personnel a year in 27 languages and 33 dialects, in courses that range from a twelve-week "quickie" in Vietnamese to a full 47 weeks in Chinese, Russian, Arabic and some 13 other languages.[11] It is in these institutions that intensive language training is carried on in its purest form, where it again serves the requirements of military expediency. No civilian university has elected to carry on the traditions characteristic of the intensive language training methodology which is displayed by the Defense Language Institute and its civilian adjuncts, Yale, Syracuse and Indiana University.

While we have witnessed some striking changes in the structure and methodology of language teaching in our colleges and universities since the Second World War, these changes are but a small portion of the changes we can expect in the near future, and a smaller part of the changes we might expect when such progressive fields as education, psychology and communication theory are brought to bear on the problems of effective foreign language teaching.

Intensive language training is currently based on three fundamental principles; the principle of a complete concentration on one purpose, the principle of a high degree of curriculum organization and planning, and the principle of the separation of the functions of teaching and drilling.

The first principle is that of one hundred per cent concentration on the task at hand, attaining mastery or fluency in a foreign language. In our decade a forty hour work week is the current standard; one hundred per cent concentration means forty hours a week. Therefore, government and military personnel, for whom such a course of language training is often required, normally spend six hours a day, five days a week in a formal class room environment, and then put in an additional two or three hours of homework each night. There is no natural reason why such a program could not be extended beyond this arbitrary forty hour per week limit. However, there is no basis to believe that forty hours a week active study of a foreign language is not too much time over the long run. Nevertheless, the first salient characteristic of intensive language training is the principle that if you really want to master something, you can hardly do better than by spending most of your consciously directed time and effort trying to master that one thing. The principle of one hundred per cent concentration on the task at hand could probably be applied to gaining mastery of any particular phase of a foreign language. It is just as easy to imagine a group of students devoting all their time to learning to produce good abstracts of technical articles as it is to imagine them devoting all their time to learning to converse in a foreign language. It just happens that the emphasis required for most positions in the government or the military service has traditionally been an audio-lingual fluency.

The second principle is that an intensive language program is by nature highly organized. This is both a result of the large enrollments normal to intensive language programs, as well as a result of the great speed with which an intensive language program covers the material. If teachers and students in an intensive language program do not know what is required of them specifically and in great detail every moment, there is chaos and a great deal of lost time. If in a traditional three or four hours per week language course the student should not be prepared for the lesson, he can often improvise his way through the class hour, and have a day or so to prepare the next lesson more thoroughly. Intensive language training moves much too rapidly to accomodate any such improvisation unless it is specifically planned. The planning that goes into a traditional college fifteen week course meeting four hours per week would be expended before the end of the second week in an intensive language course. Thus, a high degree of organization and planning is one of the natural prerequisites of an intensive language training course.

The third principle is that of the separation of the functions of teaching and drilling. Whereas we would never expect the professor of physics or chemistry to be both a lecturer and a laboratory, there has been a latent expectancy that the language teacher will be an excellent lecturer as well as an excellent drill instructor. This concept seems to be a notion well ingrained in our traditional thinking. By separating the responsabilities of academic lecturer and drill instructor, perhaps we can arrive at a situation analogous to that of the physics professor and the physics laboratory, and in so doing, insure optimum fulfillment of both functions.

In all other respects, the principles characteristic of the intensive language programs of the ASTP model are valid for the Defense Language Institute model.

The Changing Aspects of Language Training

In spite of our relatively recent experience with intensive language training, evoked in times of national crisis when it became a military necessity to bring foreign language training to its utmost efficiency, our modern foreign language teaching methodology at the college level has changed very little over the last several decades. That our colleges and universities are willing to perpetuate their traditional methods without further innovation and experimentation and without drawing more heavily on the new techniques developed with intensive language training, is a matter of concern for the teaching profession. Such ideas and principles as increased class contact hours, smaller class size, the audio-lingual approach with emphasis first placed on acquisition of the spoken language, the use of native informants, and linguistically guided patterned structural drills appear as firm recommendations of the Modern Language Association in the conference report prepared and edited by MacAllister on the preparation of college teachers of modern foreign language finally only after more than twenty years since they were first used by Cowan, Graves and Springer to characterize intensive language training in 1944.[12]

It would be a credit to our institutions of higher learning to see a renewed effort and experimentation with intensive language training along the lines of the ASTP and DLI model. It would be equally pleasing to see some of the principles and characteristics of intensive language training of twenty years ago further implemented as fundamental bases of our current college level language programs, as the MacAllister report urges.

Notes

1. William G. Moulton, "Linguistics and Language Teaching in the United States 1940-1960." International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1963), pp. 21-41.

2. Mary R. Haas, "The Application of Linguistics to Language Teaching," in Anthropology Today, edited by A.L. Kroeber, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1953, pp. 807-818.

3. Jacob Ornstein, "Structurally Oriented Texts and Teaching Methods Since World War II: A Survey and Appraisal," The Modern Language Journal, Vol. XL, No. 5 (May 1956), pp. 213-222

4. Paul F. Angiolillo, Armed Forces Foreign Language Teaching, S.F. Vanni, New York, 1947, pp. vi + 440.

5. Robert John Matthew, Language and Area Studies in the Armed Services; Their Future Significance, American Council on Education, Washington D.C., 1947, pp. ix + 211.

6. Otto Springer, "Intensive Language Study as a Part of the College Curriculum," The German Quarterly, Vol. XVII, No. 1 (February 1944), pp. 225-227.

7. J. Milton Cowan and Mortimer Graves, "A Statement on Intensive Language Instruction," Hispania, Vol. XXVII, No. 1 (February 1944), Part I, pp. 225-227.

8. Foreign Languages and the Army Program, A statement adopted by the Commission on Trends in Education of the Modern Language Association of America, Atlantic City, New Jersey, May 27, 1944, PMLA, Vol. LIX, No. 4 (December 1944), pp. 1317.

9. Springer, Op. Cit.

10. Haas, Op. Cit., p. 815.

11. "Education," TIME, Vol. 86, No. 3 (July 16, 1965), pp. 54,56.

12. MacAllister, Archibald T., "The preparation of College Teachers of Modern Foreign Languages: A Conference Report," PMLA, Vol. LXXIX, No. 2 (May 1964), pp. 29-43, see especially pages 32 b and 41 b and 42 a.

13. This work has been supported by a grant from the Ohio University Fund.